



# 3 Capitol Square Complex

## Richmond Context

- Location and Access
- Street Hierarchy and Structure
- Topography
- Urban Form
- Neighborhoods, Historic Districts, and Uses
- Richmond Planning Initiatives

## Capitol Square Complex

- Historic Development
- Structure
- Landscape and Open Space
- Circulation
  - Vehicular
  - Parking
  - Pedestrian
- Existing Signage

## Opportunities and Constraints

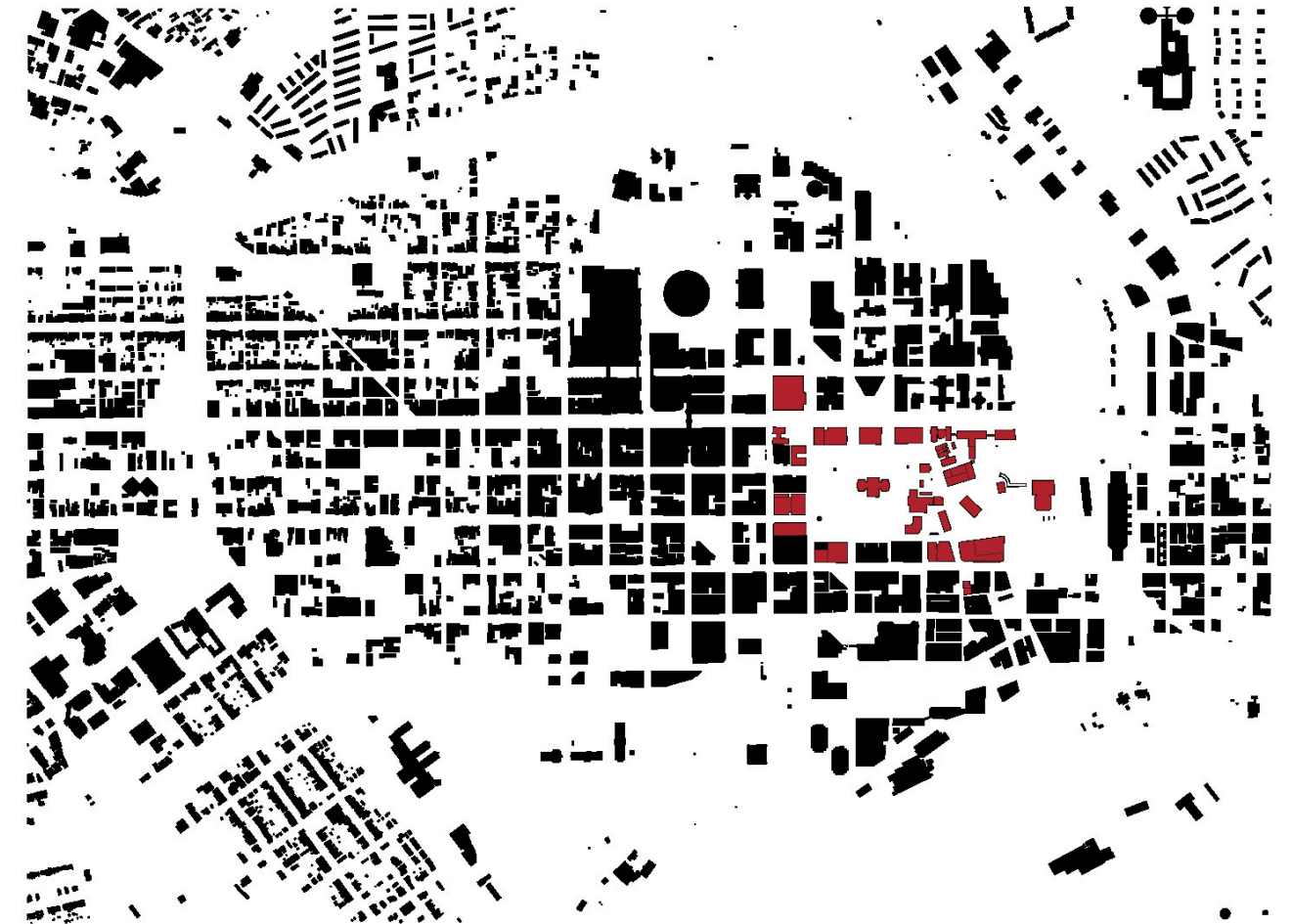


Fig. 3-1 Capitol Square figure - ground



## VIRGINIA STATE CAPITOL MASTER PLAN



## Richmond Context

### Location and Access

The Capitol Square complex is an integral part of downtown Richmond. Located in the southeast section, it is easily accessible from various downtown highways and streets. Interstate 95 (Downtown Expressway) forms the eastern boundary of the complex. The area is also accessible from I-64 via surface streets. Broad Street, a major east-west downtown arterial, forms the northern boundary of the complex. Other downtown streets, including Franklin, Cary, Main, and Leigh, provide easy east-west vehicular access. Belvedere, 3rd, and 5th streets provide north-south connections from the highways, and 2nd, 9th, and 14th streets provide connections from southern metropolitan Richmond.



Fig. 3-2 Downtown Richmond

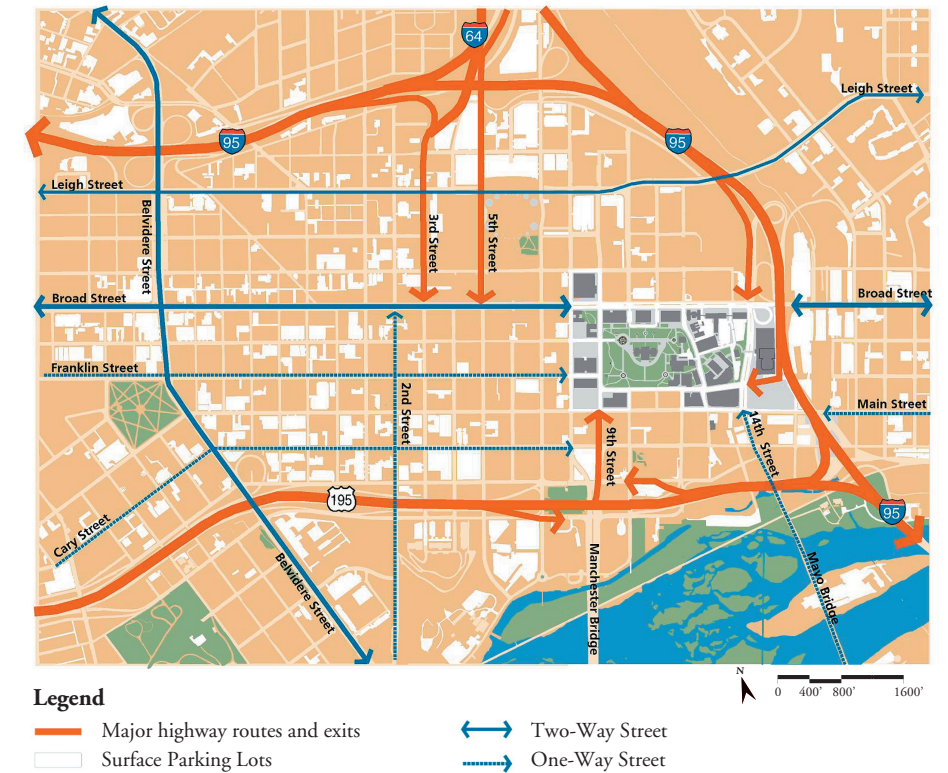


Fig. 3-3 Capitol Square location within downtown Richmond and major access roads





Fig. 3-4 Street Hierarchy and Structure

### Street Hierarchy and Structure

The Capitol Square complex breaks the Richmond downtown street grid and block structure. This change in block morphology may be attributed to the unique topography existing around the Capitol when Thomas Jefferson sited the building on top of Shockoe Hill. The Capitol Square complex occupies a downtown area of six blocks by two-and-a-half-blocks. Although the break in downtown block structure (morphology), and the topography set the complex apart from the other downtown commercial blocks, the Capitol Square area is not distinctly visible. In fact, the Capitol building and its grounds are hidden behind a row of buildings when viewed from Broad Street in the north direction, and from Main Street south of the Capitol Square complex. The relatively large block size on the east side of the Capitol makes this area difficult to navigate for pedestrians as well as for vehicular traffic.



Fig. 3-5 Capitol atop Shockoe Hill



Fig. 3-6 Steep topography around the Capitol

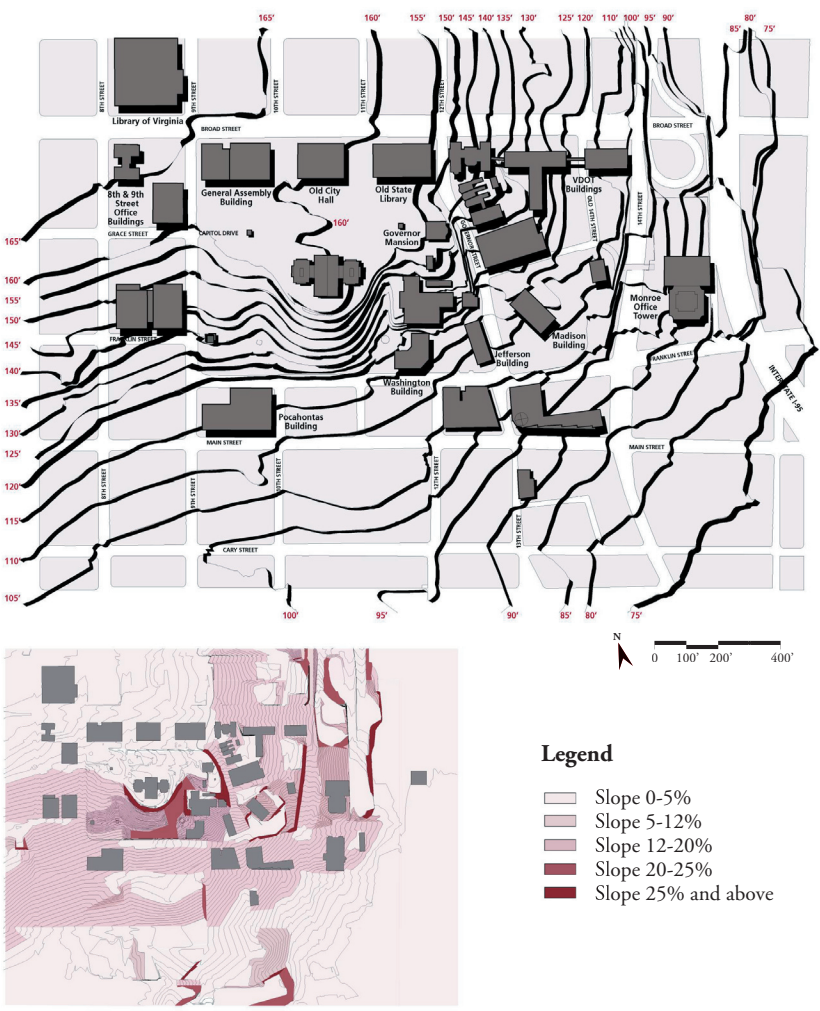


Fig. 3-7 Capitol Square topography and slope





## Topography

The Virginia State Capitol sits atop Shockoe Hill, 160 feet above sea level. According to Thomas Jefferson's early designs for the building, the Capitol was intentionally sited at this higher elevation. Directly in front of the Capitol, the topography drops 40 feet, at a slope of over 25 percent. The topography drops to below 100 feet just a quarter of a mile away as the land continues to slope toward the James River. The difference in elevation between Broad and Main streets is approximately 60 feet. Building orientations and the location of entrances reflect this unique topography. Governor Street, a north-south street within Capitol Square complex, drops over 50 feet from Broad Street on the north to Franklin Street on the south. Most of the flat land in the complex is located to the north and west of the Capitol around the General Assembly Building.

The steepest slopes within the Capitol Square complex—those over 25 percent—occur in front of the Capitol, around the Madison Building's parking garage, east of the Finance Building, and at the west side parking lots along 14th Street.

## Urban Form

The downtown blocks reflect a continuous building edge of generally uniform height, particularly along Broad Street, the western parts of Main Street, and the Shockoe Slip section of Cary Street. Sections of 2nd, 5th, and 8th streets also provide a continuous building edge that defines downtown sub-districts. Most of the high-rise office towers in downtown Richmond are southwest of the Capitol Square complex. The Medical College of Virginia campus also provides a distinct edge along Broad and Leigh streets north of the complex.

Capitol Square is one of the major actively used open spaces (16 acres) amidst the surrounding dense urban blocks of downtown Richmond. The surrounding Capi-

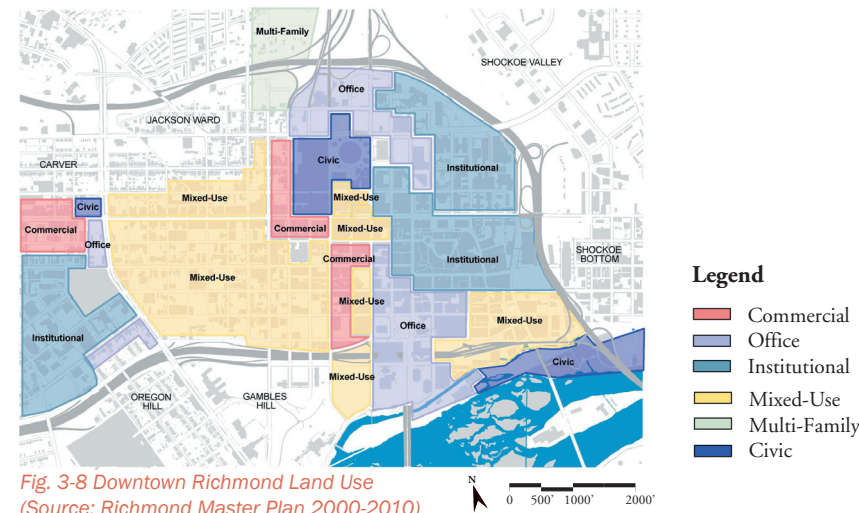


Fig. 3-8 Downtown Richmond Land Use  
(Source: Richmond Master Plan 2000-2010)

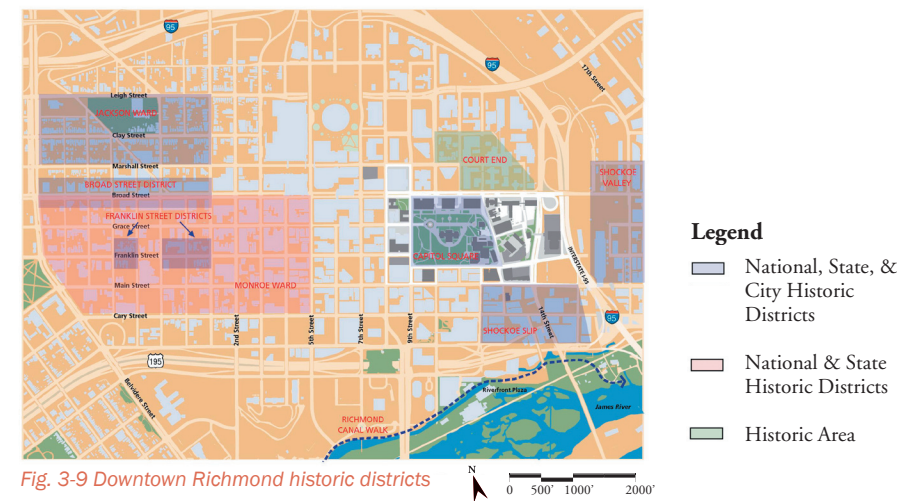


Fig. 3-9 Downtown Richmond historic districts

tol Square complex buildings clearly reflect the presence of this open space. Many buildings around the Square have their public entrances facing toward the Capitol. In contrast, buildings in the eastern part of the complex do not have the benefit of open space, with the Monroe and Madison buildings as freestanding towers.

## Neighborhoods, Historic Districts, and Uses

The City of Richmond Master Plan 2000–2010 shows four diverse land uses around the Capitol Square area. Office use is located on the east; office and mixed-use on the south; institutional and industrial on the north; and mixed-use on the west. The mixed-use areas on the south and east contain the only residential use within a few blocks of Capitol Square. The Capitol Square area remains predominantly an office area.

The Richmond Downtown Plan (October 1997) prepared by the City of Richmond identifies eight different downtown districts, including the Capitol District, which contains city, state, and federal buildings, and the Capitol Square complex.

Richmond has a rich variety of historic neighborhoods and buildings. Downtown Richmond also has various national, state and city historic districts. Notable historic districts close to the Capitol Square complex include Shockoe Slip on the south, and the Court End area to the north. The Capitol Square complex, itself, contains a major concentration of historic buildings.

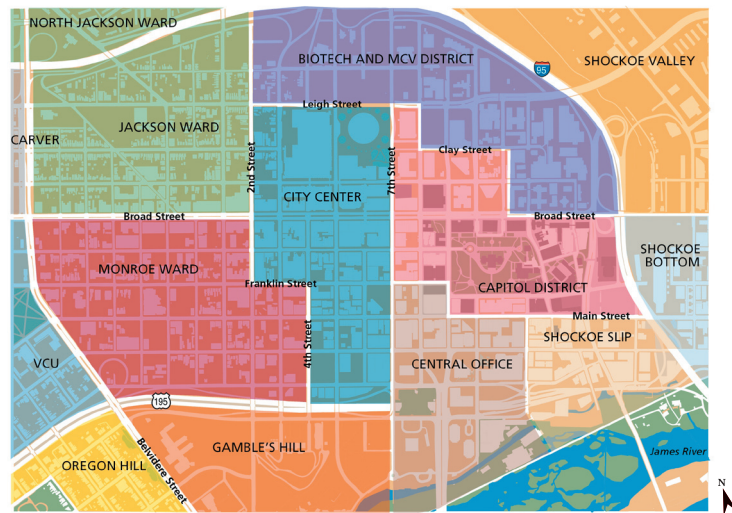


Fig. 3-10 Richmond's diverse downtown neighborhoods

Richmond Planning Initiatives

The City of Richmond has initiated new projects for the revitalization and resurgence of its downtown. The consultant team reviewed some of these recent planning proposals to assess their potential impact on this master plan. In addition, the City has recently completed or is in the process of completing many revitalization efforts in the vicinity of the Capitol Square complex. The Greater Richmond Convention Center, built in the 1990s, was strategically placed near the Richmond Coliseum in a major effort to attract large-scale events to the city. Tobacco Row is a collection of tobacco warehouses and cigarette factories located along the Shockoe Slip area, which is now part of the restored canal system. These buildings date from 1886 to 1929.

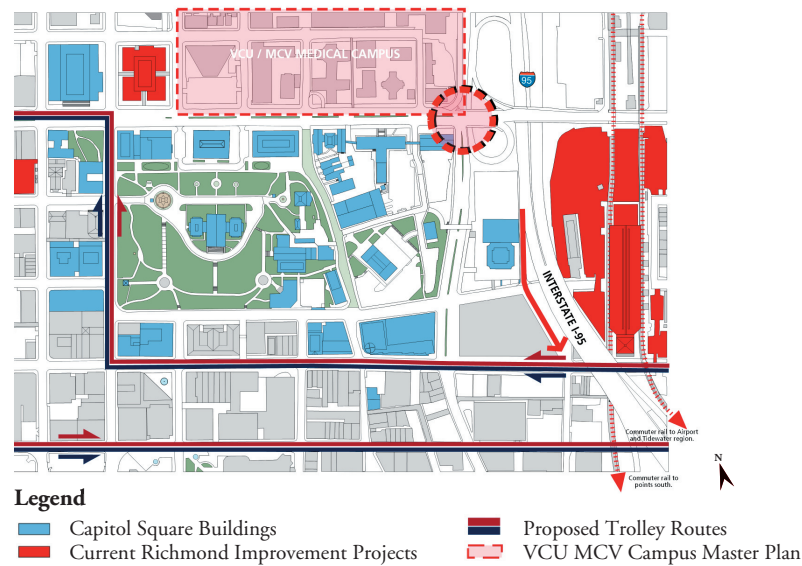


Fig. 3-11 Recent downtown Richmond planning proposals around Capitol Square

Extensively renovated during the last decade, most have been converted to apartments and retail space. The Richmond Canal Walk was initiated in 1987 as part of the “Richmond Renaissance.” The City has spent the first \$50 million as part of an extensive \$400 million urban reinvestment plan of the 1.25-mile path that meanders along the riverbank.

The restoration of the Tredegar Iron Works has transformed the dilapidated industrial warehouse into a National Park Service visitor center. The Main Street Train Station and Train Shed, located in the heart of the city, were reopened as Richmond’s main

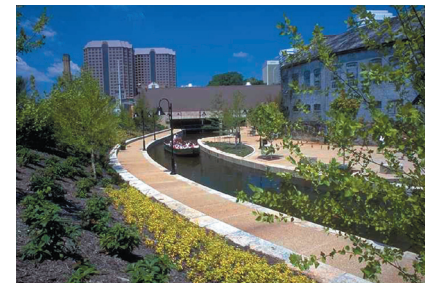


Fig. 3-12 Richmond Canal Walk



Fig. 3-14 Proposed federal courthouse

passenger rail station in 2003, bringing much-needed visitors back into the central city for the first time since 1970. There are presently plans to reinstate a light rail transit system along the Broad Street corridor, which could connect the city to the growing suburban population and the expanding Richmond International Airport, located about 14 miles to the east. A trolley study for downtown is also underway.

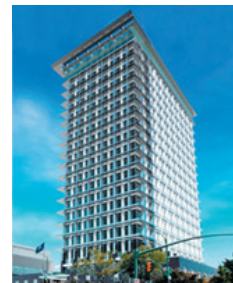


Fig. 3-13 City Hall recladding

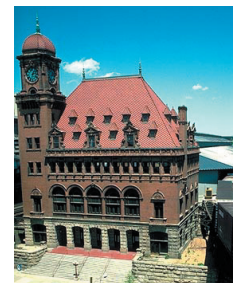


Fig. 3-15 Renovation of the Main Street Station



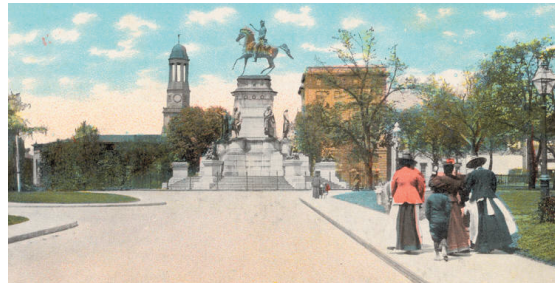


Fig. 3-16 Washington Monument and capitol grounds in the 1870s

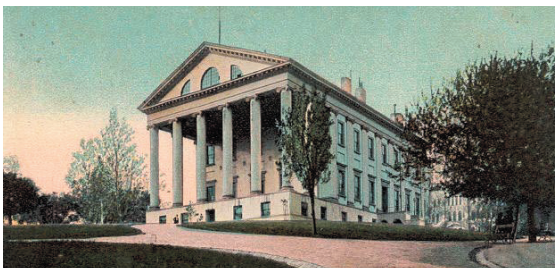
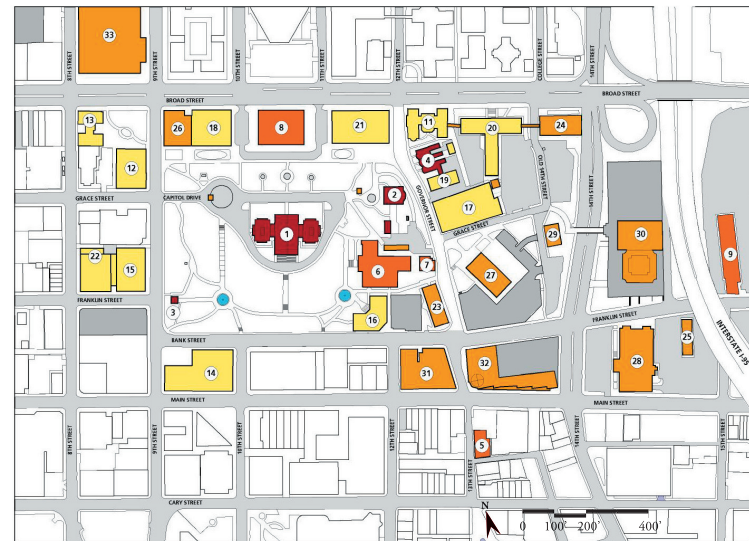


Fig. 3-17 View of the Capitol in the 1870s



#### Legend

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <div></div> (1751-1850)<br>1. VA State Capitol, 1788<br>2. Governor's Mansion, 1812<br>3. Old Bell Tower, 1824<br>4. Morson Row, 1848   | <div></div> (1851-1900)<br>5. Powers-Taylor Building, 1880<br>6. Old City Hall, 1894<br>7. Old HVAC Shops, 1894<br>8. Finance Building, 1895<br>9. Seaboard Building, 1900   |
| <div></div> (1901-1950)<br>10. Old Memorial Hospital, 1903<br>11. Ninth Street Office, 1904<br>12. Eighth Street Office, 1911<br>13. Pocahontas Building, 1913<br>14. Aluminum Building, 1915<br>15. Supreme Court Building, 1919<br>16. Washington Building, 1924<br>17. Zincke Building, 1926<br>18. GAB West Wing, 1930<br>19. Central Highway, 1939<br>20. Old State Library, 1940<br>21. Rose & Lafoon, 1950 | <div></div> (1951-2000)<br>22. Jefferson Building, 1956<br>23. VDOT Annex, 1961<br>24. Motor Fuel Test Lab, 1961<br>25. GAB East Wing, 1964<br>26. Madison Building, 1966<br>27. Consolidated Lab, 1967<br>28. Ferguson Building, 1968<br>29. Monroe Building, 1980<br>30. VRS Building, 1992<br>31. Tyler Building, 1993<br>32. Library of Virginia, 1995 |

Fig. 3-18 Chronological development of Capitol Square buildings

## Capitol Square Complex

### Historical Development

The historical development of the Capitol Square complex can be divided into four distinct phases, as illustrated in Figure 3-18. The Capitol building, designed by Thomas Jefferson, along with the site topography dictated the form and placement of later buildings.

The year 2007 marks another important historic landmark when the 400th anniversary of the Jamestown Landing will be celebrated. Renovation of the Capitol building is scheduled for completion by 2007 to coincide with commemorative celebrations of this important milestone in the history of Richmond and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

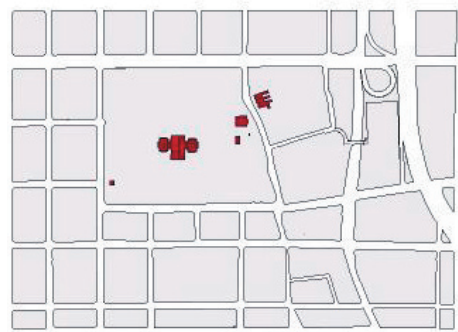
### Four Phases of Development

The four phases of development of the Capitol Square complex can be illustrated diagrammatically based on the date of construction of each building. Richmond is rich in history and the varied architectural styles of the four development phases exhibit the unique social, economic, and political characteristics of their periods. The Capitol Square complex has undergone dramatic changes around the original Capitol building, which acts as the main seat of government and physical anchor to the complex. Master planning of this historic area was conducted for the first time comparatively recently, beginning in 1952, as described in Chapter 1. The area continues to expand along with several downtown Richmond revitalization projects.





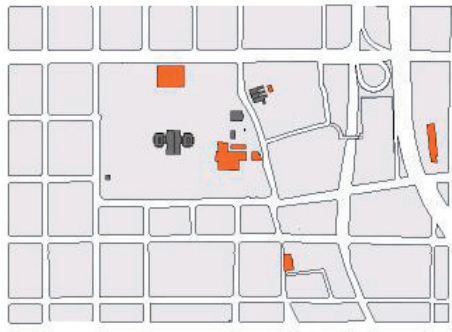
VIRGINIA STATE CAPITOL MASTER PLAN



Built 1750-1850

Birth of the Capital: 1780 –1850

The development of Capitol Square began with the selection of Richmond as the seat of government of the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1780, when the capital was moved to Richmond from Williamsburg. Construction of the Capitol building, designed by Thomas Jefferson, began in 1785. Governor’s Mansion was constructed in 1812 and the replacement of the wooden Bell Tower occurred subsequently in 1824.

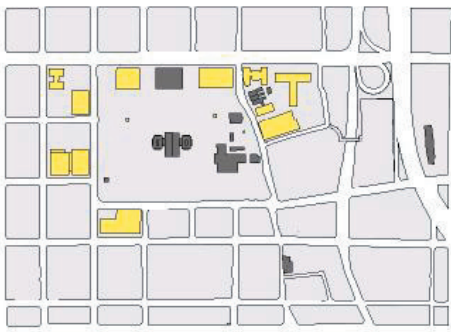


Built 1851-1900

Civil War Years: 1851-1900

The second phase of development saw the construction of the Morson’s Row townhouses (219–223 Governor Street) in 1853—the only remaining evidence of the residential neighborhood that once surrounded Capitol Square—and the dedication of George Washington Monument on Capitol Square in 1858. This was the period of the Civil War when, in 1861, Richmond was named the capital of the Confederacy. Richmond’s historic references describe 1870 as the “Year of Disasters” when the area’s worst flood in 100 years collapsed the third floor of the Virginia Capitol.

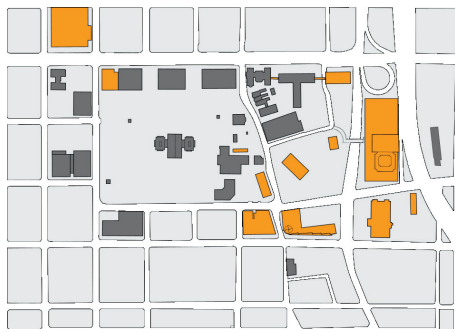
In 1888, the first electric streetcar system in the United States was opened in Richmond. In 1894, Old City Hall, built in Victorian Gothic style, was completed.



Built 1901-1950

A New Beginning: 1901-1950

The third phase of development saw the greatest growth and construction activity in the history of the Capitol Square complex. Richmond experienced a new beginning with the tobacco trade; the year 1946 was a turning point for Richmond’s economy, marking the highest level of business activity in the history of the city. During this period, Richmond became the fastest growing industrial center in the United States.



Built 1951-2000

Growth Consolidation: 1951-2000

During this period, Capitol Square’s first master plan study was undertaken in 1952. In 1959, the Reynolds Metals Company established its headquarters in Richmond. From 1963 to 1965, more than 700 buildings were constructed in the Richmond downtown area.

Richmond’s metropolitan area experienced a significant growth in population to 996,000 in the year 2000. The James River’s ongoing flood problems were resolved in 1995 with the construction of the floodwall to protect Richmond’s downtown.



Fig. 3-19 The picturesque Capitol grounds

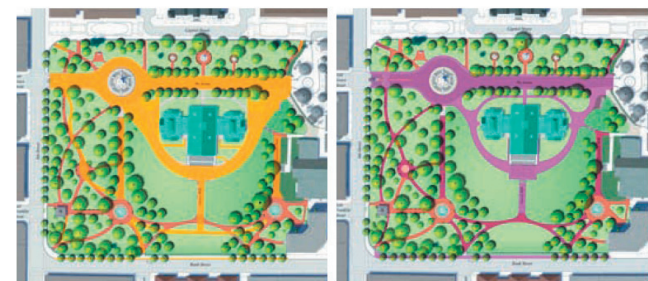


Fig. 3-20 Capitol Square Landscape Master Plan, 2004, prepared by Rhodeside and Harwell



Fig. 3-21 Capitol Square Landscape Master Plan proposed east section

## Structure

The Capitol building acts as the organizing element and center for a significant part of the Capitol Square complex. However, other areas of the complex exhibit a lack of order. Various attempts to organize the site have been made in previous master plans, such as making the Capitol building the center of the complex with new buildings forming a ring around it, or following a visual axis with the Capitol.

These proposals were never realized or followed consistently, in part because the idea of a view corridor with the Capitol as its center is difficult to achieve given the site's sloping terrain. The Capitol Square complex as it exists today exhibits pieces of these unrealized designs, such as the Monroe Building—part of a two-tower scheme proposed in the 1970 master plan—and the angled Madison Building, one of a ring of high-rise towers anchored at the opposite end by the VDOT Annex.

## Landscape and Open Space

In March 2004, in a study separate from this master plan, Rhodeside & Harwell, Inc. prepared a landscape master plan for the Capitol Square grounds. The report describes in detail the existing conditions and provides recommendations for improving the historic Capitol Square grounds. The eastern part of the complex, however, was not included in the landscape master plan study since the area is devoid of any significant landscape features, with few sidewalks, landscaped open spaces, or trees.

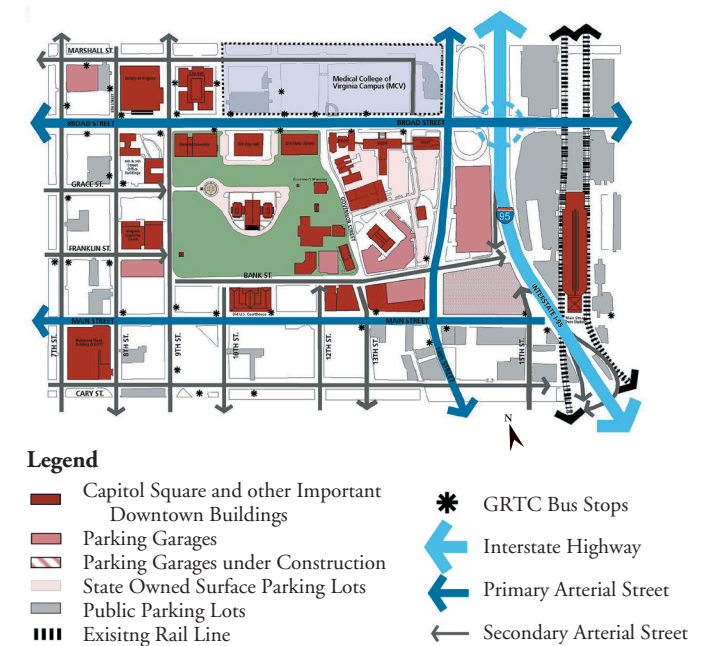


Fig. 3-22 Vehicular access to Capitol Square and existing parking locations

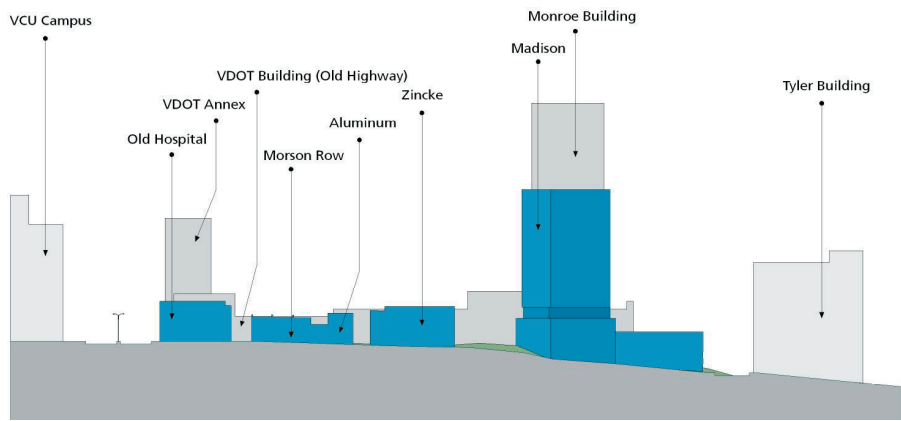


Fig. 3-23 Existing section : Governor Street east

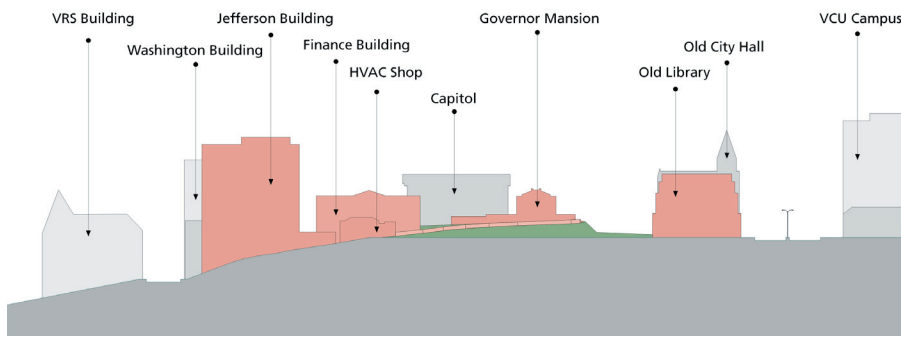


Fig. 3-24 Existing section : Governor Street west

Circulation

Vehicular Circulation

The Capitol Square area is part of the Richmond downtown street grid. Vehicular access to various Capitol Square buildings and garages follows the downtown’s unidirectional traffic network. Although Broad Street is a major thoroughfare abutting the Capitol Square area, access to the complex via Broad Street is difficult; only 14th and 8th streets allow access into Capitol Square due to existing traffic directions.

Governor Street is a north-south street that traverses the complex, dividing it into two distinct east and west sections. The west side contains the landscaped Capitol Square. The east side contains difficult topographic terrain covered by surface parking lots. DGS has closed Governor Street to vehicular traffic.

Existing Congestion

Access into and out of the Capitol Square area is constrained primarily by access to and from I-95 and I-64, as illustrated in Figure 3-22. Currently, the Broad Street interchange on I-95 provides access from northbound and southbound I-95 through an old Turnpike-era interchange that has tight horizontal geometry and limited capacity for expansion. On southbound I-95, off-ramps are provided onto westbound Broad Street at the Broad Street interchange (Exit 74A) and at the Franklin Street off-ramp (Exit 74C). From northbound I-95, off-ramps are provided at the Broad Street interchange with two ramps: one that loops to the east and connects to Broad Street via 17th Street, and the other crossing under I-95 and connecting with the southbound off-ramp. The latter ramp is infrequently used due to the superior travel choices and ease of access using the 17th Street off-ramp.

On-ramps to enter I-95 in both directions are provided at the Broad Street interchange just east of 14th Street with a loop ramp provided on eastbound Broad Street, and a slip ramp provided on westbound Broad Street. Alternative routes from downtown Richmond are available to access I-95 to the north and I-64 to the east and west using the Downtown Expressway (I-195) and the 7th Street viaduct, which connects directly to I-95 at the eastern junction of I-64.

During the morning peak hour, traffic congestion occurs on the Franklin Street off-ramp, with vehicle queuing on Franklin Street heading toward Capitol Square. This ramp is very short with a limited deceleration lane and a steep downgrade with traffic signal control at its intersection with Franklin Street. Occasionally, this ramp experiences backups onto the southbound I-95 mainline. Broad Street also experiences con-



Fig. 3-25 Vehicular access to Capitol Square



Fig. 3-26 Existing surface parking lots





gestion during the morning peak hour in the westbound direction between 14th Street and Old 14th Street where the I-95 southbound off-ramp merges onto Broad Street. Traffic destined for parking lots behind the Department of Transportation buildings (in the northeast quadrant of the Capitol Square complex) often adds to this congestion by weaving from the off-ramp in an effort to turn left onto Old 14th Street.

During the evening peak hour, northbound 14th Street experiences the worst congestion, with the right lane often backing up at peak times between Broad and Bank streets. One problem is that the right turn movement from 14th Street onto eastbound Broad Street is tight and difficult for heavy vehicles, including buses.

Parking

Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., the civil engineering and traffic planning sub-consultant, conducted a detailed parking assessment of the Capitol Square area, as well as a visitor-focused parking analysis, which is included in the Capitol Square Tourism Potential Report, April 2004.

The parking area preferred by visitors and state employees is located within a two-block radius (about 1,200 feet) of the Capitol building. For the purpose of the parking assessment, therefore, the study area is bounded by Marshall Street on the north, 14th Street to the east, Cary Street on the south, and 7th Street to the west.

As illustrated in Figure 3-28, an existing quadrant-level parking assessment was conducted for the Capitol Square complex using agency surveys; the Program Needs Summary Report; parking assignments dated December 30, 2003, as provided by DGS; and employee daytime building population.

Table 3-1 Capitol Square Campus Employee Parking Comparison

Quadrant	Parking Supply*	Parking Assignment	Daytime Population During Session	Design Population (80 Percent)	Parking Deficit (Supply vs. Design Pop.)
Northwest	959	1,185	1,354**	1,083	-124
Southwest	230	133	676	541	-311
Subtotal West	1,189	1,318	2,030	1,624	-435
Northeast	694	663	2,014	1,611	-917
Southeast	3,153	3,493	2,878	2,302	851
Subtotal East	3,847	4,156	4,892	3,913	-66
Total	5,036	5,474	6,922	5,537	-501

\*DGS-owned and/or -managed parking facilities.  
\*\*NW Quadrant includes Capitol building employees.



Fig. 3-27 Regional access to Capitol Square complex

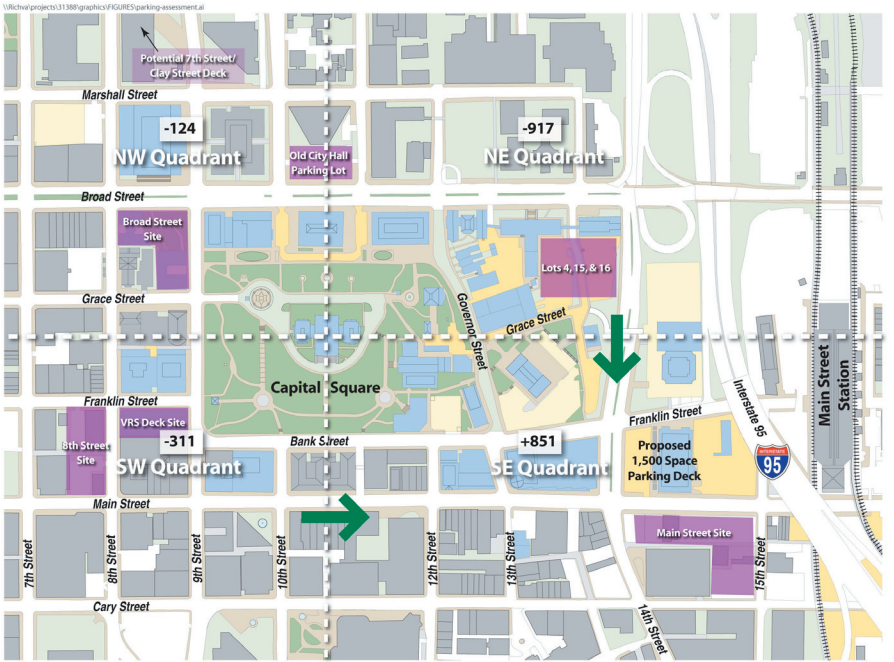


Fig. 3-28 Parking by quadrant

Currently, the Capitol Square complex has a total of 4,956 parking spaces, with peak in-session parking assignment of 5,304 spaces. DGS uses 17 designated parking facilities including 7 structured parking locations to provide parking for state employees. DGS is also currently constructing a new parking deck containing approximately 1,500 parking spaces at the intersection of 14th and Main streets (previously the Consolidated Laboratory site).



DGS currently provides 5,036 parking spaces over a total of 19 surface and structured parking facilities within the Capitol Square complex, as summarized in Table 3-1. Included is the new 1,500-space DGS parking deck on Main Street (now under construction) with 1,150 spaces allocated for state employee use and the transfer of parking in the Seaboard and Main Street Station lots (loss of 970 parking spaces) to Main Street Station. When the General Assembly is in session, this parking supply will be inadequate to serve a targeted 80 percent of state employees, falling short by 501 parking spaces (roughly 10 percent). The northeast quadrant, in particular, has the largest parking shortfall.

Parking supply is currently very constrained in the entire downtown Richmond area, from the Central Business District to Capitol Square, City Hall, and the VCU Medical Center campus. Planned development over the next 10 years—including the new federal courthouse, the redevelopment of the Broad Street corridor, several VCU Medical Center projects (Massey Cancer Center Expansion, Medical Office Building II, West Hospital redevelopment), Main Street Station and the recently instituted passenger rail service, and a potential baseball stadium in nearby Shockoe Slip—will all contribute to the parking deficit. Currently, parking garages are being considered on the Old City Hall site, and as part of the Broad Street corridor redevelopment; however, this will fall well short of satisfying even new parking demand, let alone the existing parking deficits.

### Pedestrian Circulation

Pedestrian enhancement proposals in the Downtown Richmond Master Plan (1997) recognize the Shockoe Slip area, Main Street, and Richmond's commercial center as potential opportunities for strengthening the pedestrian network. This network needs to be further extended to the Capitol Square area from the adjacent downtown districts.

Topography also provides unique challenges for the Capitol Square area and its buildings. Although all the buildings are within walking distance of the Capitol, the sloping terrain makes walking more difficult and the perceived distance greater. Different-level pedestrian entrances to the same building also add difficulty to pedestrian orientation.

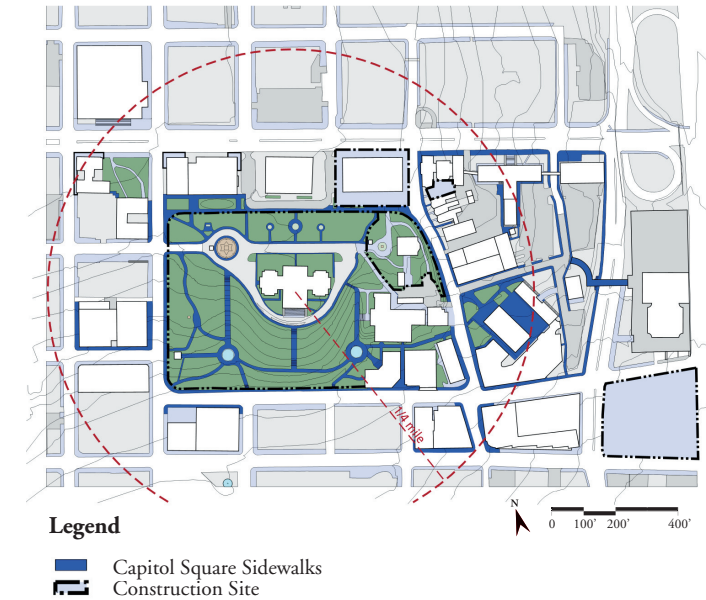


Fig. 3-29 Pedestrian Accessibility and Circulation

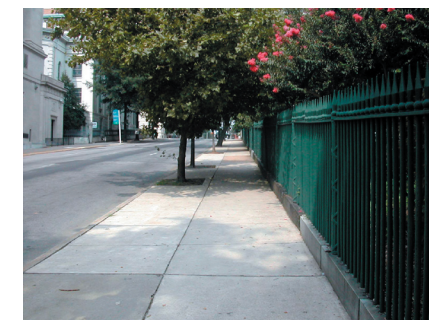


Fig. 3-30 Original 1816 cast-iron fence

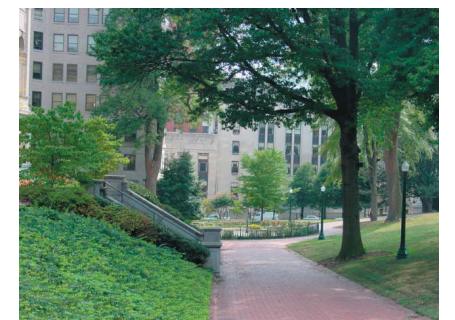


Fig. 3-31 Picturesque brick-paved sidewalks





## Existing Signage

As part of the master plan process, the signage and wayfinding sub-consultant, Cloud Gehshan Associates, conducted a wayfinding study with the intent of making the Capitol Square complex more user friendly from both a local and visitor's point of view.

The study found that the existing signage in and leading to the Capitol Square complex is inadequate, confusing, and poorly located. Signage is completely non-existent in some areas, and where it does exist, it is very limited, with little or no direction. The result is ineffective wayfinding and identification for most destinations.

Because the existing signage is the product of disparate efforts over a long period of time, the graphic quality is inconsistent and problematic. Not only does this lessen the aesthetic impact and hamper the identity function of the system, it also has a negative effect on wayfinding. Consistent nomenclature and a unified look would permit visitors to quickly and easily take in wayfinding information, rather than having to scan every sign or look for signs that do not exist.

Signs directing motorists entering or leaving the Capitol Square area to nearby freeway on-ramps need to be analyzed to verify whether they are sufficient.



Fig. 3-32 Orientation signage



Fig. 3-33 Pedestrian directional



Fig. 3-34 Interpretive signage

While orientation maps of Capitol Square are located at the pedestrian entrances to the State House, there are no orientation maps in key areas, such as drop-off points, parking facilities, and key attractions.

Pedestrian directional signage is nonexistent on the grounds.

The only interpretation is provided by a few historical markers. Interpretive signage is an important feature due to its storytelling ability. Interpretive signage plays a large role in the visitor experience by telling stories about people, places, and events.



Fig. 3-35 Vehicular directional



Fig. 3-36 Parking identification



Fig. 3-37 Building identification

Existing vehicular directional signs are inadequate, whether approaching the site, looking for parking, locating buildings, or exiting the site. There is a strong need for vehicular signage in and around the Capital Square area to direct vehicular traffic properly.

Existing public and staff parking identification is non-existent and there is no clear or visible directional or identification signing of parking garages or lots that are accessible for visitor parking.

Problems that exist with building identification are;

1. There are blocked messages due to overgrown foliage and improper orientation.
2. Copy is too small for vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
3. No consistency in the verbiage or layout.
4. Building addresses should be clearly identified on the building signs (this would be very helpful when identifying a building or keying it to a map or wayfinding program).





OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

The following is a summary of potential improvements and new construction opportunities as well as some of the physical constraints described in the preceding Capitol Square complex existing site conditions analysis.

Opportunities

**New Construction and Re-use Opportunities:** The Capitol Square complex has a number of potential new construction sites, as well as opportunities to re-use existing buildings, either in their entirety or the space within them. The VDOT parking lots and the Eighth Street and Ninth Street Office buildings offer potential infill building sites that can be used both to meet the demand for new space and to mitigate some site constraints in order to integrate the eastern part of the Capitol Square into the overall complex.

**New Parking Locations:** A number of parking opportunity sites exist within a two-block area of Capitol Square. There also are a number of existing parking garages available to DGS for potential parking consideration.

**Gateway Opportunities:** Four street intersections along the approach to the Capitol offer potential gateway sites: 8th and Broad streets, 14th and Broad streets, 14th and Main streets, and 9th and Main streets. These intersections serve as the main Capitol Square vehicular entrances.

**Tourism Potential Enhancement:** DGS is currently planning a new Capitol Square visitor entrance in the western part of the Capitol Square complex on Bank Street. Plans include a small visitor orientation center and wider sidewalk in this area, which will benefit hundreds of tourists visiting Capitol Square each year.



Fig. 3-38 Parking behind VDOT Annex Building



Fig. 3-39 Panorama of the Capitol Square complex from the Monroe Building deck looking northwest



Fig. 3-40 Opportunities Map



Fig. 3-41 Constraints Map

## Constraints

**Parking Constraint:** The Capitol Square complex area faces acute parking shortages that are compounded by difficult terrain for walking, particularly in the northeast quadrant. This area currently has three surface parking lots that were partially extended after the demolition of the Sauders Building and Capitol Chemical Building (1993 master plan). The area at present has few sidewalks and is devoid of trees. Existing unsightly parking areas with no landscape, open asphalt surfaces, and unfriendly parking garages with no alternating retail, office, or mix of uses at the street level, make an unfriendly pedestrian campus that can be easily be improved by sensitive design.



Fig. 3-42 Parking shortage highlighted by signage



Fig. 3-44 Surface parking lots are visually disruptive.

**Security Constraints:** A number of Capitol Square complex buildings now have increased security protection levels. Capitol Square and the adjoining open spaces are closely watched and surveyed by the Capitol Police, and the Capitol Square area and the Governor's Mansion are fenced. The increased security level and protection measures are significant factors for any future development consideration. The presence of the Capitol, General Assembly Building, Governor's Mansion, and federal and Supreme Court buildings in the complex area all contribute to the high level of security.

**Topography:** The hilly terrain adds difficulty to otherwise walkable distances within the Capitol Square complex. Building entrances, the location of building signage, parking garage entrances, and suitability for tree planting are some of the building and site design constraints imposed by topography. Governor Street and other sidewalks that connect buildings have significant grade changes. Many buildings in the Capitol Square complex require a significant portion of their budget to make them accessible.

**Highway and Vehicular traffic:** I-95 on the east side of the Capitol Square complex acts a visual and physical barrier. The area also has a number of traffic interchanges that create hazardous pedestrian crossings. The only way into the complex from I-95, when traveling west on Broad Street, is via 8th Street.

**Lack of Visibility and Visitor Orientation:** The Capitol building is not easily visible from Main or Broad streets, the area's two major east-west thoroughfares. Lack of signage on these streets adds to the poor visibility, further confining the complex.



## VIRGINIA STATE CAPITOL MASTER PLAN